

Family and friends puzzle over murder

PUZZLE

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pened," he said. "He had no financial problems, always had money. He had the best of both worlds."

One week before their first wedding anniversary, Pamela Smart arrived home Tuesday at about 10:15 p.m. and found her husband, Gregory, lying on the floor of their Summerhill condominium, dead from a single gunshot wound to the head.

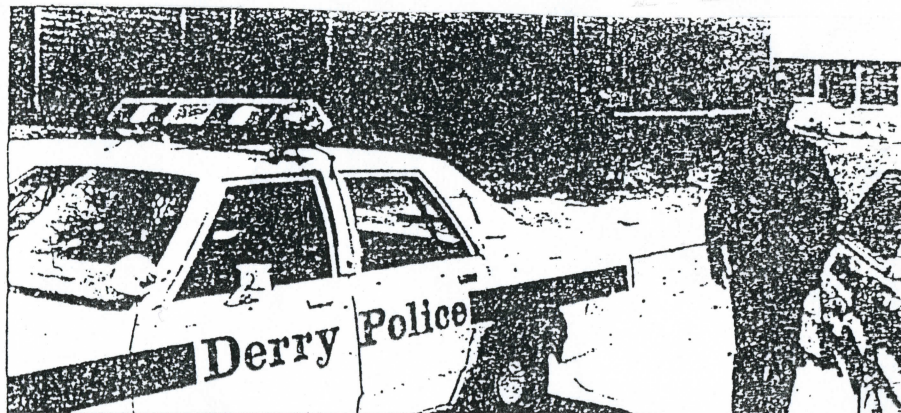
Police have not yet named a suspect and refuse to comment on the progress of the investigation.

Smart, 24, an insurance salesman for Metropolitan Life, was described as an innocent, happy-go-lucky type. Mourning family members said he was a clean-cut man whose death has left his wife heartbroken.

But neighbors reported Smart to be a very private individual, someone they never got to know during the 18 months he and his wife lived in the condominium complex.

Most of Smart's friends were his buddies from Londonderry High School, from which he graduated in 1983. Parilla was the best man at the Smarts' May 7, 1989, wedding. Cutting short their honeymoon, Gregory Smart returned early from the couple's vacation to Bermuda to be Parilla's best man last May 13.

Smart worked for the last 18 months at Metropolitan Life in Nashua, where his father also worked. A graduate of Londonderry High School, he also attended Metropolitan's Career



SEARCH CONTINUES — Police continued their search Wednesday for clues in connection with the Tuesday night murder of Gregory Smart.

School in Warwick, R.I.

Metropolitan Manager Paul Breault, a friend of the family, said he knew Smart since his youngest years. For the short time Smart worked for the company, Breault said he had the sales potential of a three- or four-year veteran. Breault described Smart as personable and very good at his job.

"He won trips and awards, including the Rookie of the Year award," said Breault, who had no idea why anyone would senselessly murder his employee.

But the issue at hand for Smart's family seemed to focus more on their loss than the cause of the crime.

Smart's father and mother, William and Judith, who live a few blocks from their son's home, declined to make any comment through relatives Wednesday.

Pamela Smart's father, John Wojas of Windham, said his daughter was sad, but bearing up well.

"She keeps asking who will hug me and tell me they love

me," he said. "She's holding up OK, but now she's broken-hearted."

Wojas said he had never known his son-in-law to do anything bad and approved of his friends. Pamela's mother, Judith Wojas, commented on the wonderful marriage her daughter had with Smart.

The couple, according to Parilla, met in Florida, where Pamela Smart was attending Florida State University. Since her father was a Delta airline captain, he said, she would fly home on weekends to visit Smart, who eventually moved to Florida to be with Pamela until she graduated.

The Smarts purchased and moved into their condominium shortly after they married last May. They lived less than a mile from Smart's parents, who live on Perley Avenue.

A family living next door to the Smarts said they didn't know the couple at all, nor did other neighbors on the street.

"They were very quiet, kept to themselves, and never spoke just to say hi," said a neighbor,

who wished not to be named.

Most of the individual units are connected by a common wall, but neighbors say most families keep to themselves. One neighbor, diagonally situated from the Smart's unit, didn't even hear the commotion Tuesday night when Smart's body was found.

"I couldn't believe I didn't hear anything," said Debbie Eicklin, who had moved there in January, but has yet to meet anyone living in the complex.

Although the street seems to be filled with families, not all neighbors associate with one another. Children serve as the common link between the adults in the summertime, said another neighbor.

But Tuesday night, neighbors who had never met one another congregated near the Smart's condominium to comfort each other.

"We've all been sad and depressed since last night," said Katherine Santella. "We got dressed went over and held our neighbors for comfort until we went into the night."



JUST six days short of their first anniversary, Gregory Smart was found by his wife, Pamela, Tuesday night shot to death in their Summerhill condominium.

Police hunt for murder clues

Family and friends puzzle over murder

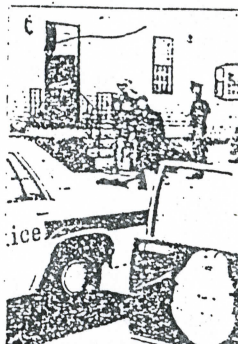
By FRANK RICHARDSON
Derry News Staff

Friends, family and neighbors remained puzzled and shocked Wednesday as they searched in their minds for a motive for Gregory Smart's apparent murder at his Derry home Tuesday night.

"He wasn't involved with drugs," volunteered Tom Parilla, a friend of Smart's. Parilla said he volunteered the information because of speculation he heard surrounding the murder.

"I have no clue what happened," he said.

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POLICE Wednesday search for clues in connection with the murder of Gregory Smart in his Summerhill condominium.

Derry man found shot and killed inside his condominium

By FRANK RICHARDSON
Derry News Staff

Derry Police are still searching for clues that could lead them to the person who shot and killed 24-year-old Gregory Smart in his home Tuesday night.

Smart was discovered dead in the foyer of his Misty Morning Drive condominium at about 10:15 p.m. by his wife, Pamela, 23.

According to state Medical Examiner Dr. Robert Fossum, Smart was killed by a single gun shot to the head about two hours before his wife came home.

After investigating the

case overnight with state police, Derry Police Capt. Loring Jackson said Wednesday morning he didn't believe the incident was tied to a burglary or random attack, but refused to elaborate on suspects or motives.

He declined to say if the apartment showed signs of a struggle. No weapon was found at the scene.

Assistant Attorney General Cynthia White said Pamela Smart has been ruled out as a suspect after looking at the evidence in the case at this point.

Derry Police Chief Edward Carone refused to comment.

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Police hunt for clues in local man's murder

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on whether he regarded Pamela Smart or anybody else as a suspect in the murder.

Minutes after Pamela Smart's arrival home Tuesday night, neighbors heard her screaming for help from the steps next door.

"There's something wrong with my husband," neighbors heard her scream. "He's hurt and he's lying on the floor."

Harvey and Mary Jane Woodside, a couple living across from the young couple, heard her screaming, got dressed and ran outside to help.

"It was a bloodcurdling scream," said Harvey Woodside. "We didn't hear a shot, we didn't hear the dog bark, nothing."

The Woodside said they entered the home and asked police if Smart needed cardiovascular pulmonary resuscitation. Police then turned him over and found there was no need for the treatment, said Harvey Woodside, who then knew Smart was dead.

"Blood doesn't bother me, but you don't expect it in your own neighborhood," said Mary Jane Woodside. "It was an incredible, awful, terrible scene."

Summerhill condominium residents congregated near unit 4E Wednesday to comfort each other and watch as an emotional family grieved.

"There was no commotion until the mother got here. She was uncontrollably hysterical," said neighbor Katherine Santella, who didn't know the Smarts.

Hours before his death, Smart

was seen at 11 a.m. on Route 102 by one of his best friends, who flashed his car headlights and waved hello. Everything seemed normal, said Tom Parilla of Londonderry.

Parilla said he didn't know now Smart could be the victim of such a crime, but made it clear he didn't believe Smart's murder was connected with drugs.

"He was never into drugs and I'm sure that's what a lot of people think," he said.

The Smarts would have been married one year May 7. Born in Nashua, Gregory Smart grew up in Londonderry and had spent the last two years in Derry. A 1983 graduate from Londonderry High School, he worked as an account representative for the Metropolitan Life Insurance Company in Nashua. Obituary, page 14.